

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04402 01 OF 02 021152Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----045215 021207Z /42

Z O 021022Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV FLASH  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM FLASH  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9031  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY OSLO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4402

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MILI, PORG, UNSC, LE, IS  
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: NEXT STEPS

REF: STATE 194462

1. KINSOLVING AND I MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIMIN HOSS AND FONMIN BOUTROS AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE 1030 LOCAL. I READ TO THEM OUR POSITION AS OUTLINED PARAS. 3-6 OF REFTEL. HOSS COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS NO GUARANTEE WITH REGARD TO QUESTION OF MAJOR HADDAD, AND THAT IF ARMY WENT AHEAD AND MOVED TO TIBNIN IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD BE HUMILIATED, CAUGHT IN A TRAP AND UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING.

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2. I SAID THAT IN LEBANON PEOPLE GOT CREDIT FOR FINDING A CLEVER WAY AROUND AN OBSTACLE. LEBANESE HAD PROCEEDED WITH PLAN TO MOVE SOUTH AND HAD ENCOUNTERED UNEXPECTED OBSTACLE. IT SEEMED TO US WAY TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM WAS TO GO AROUND IT. PUT HADDAD QUESTION IN ICEBOX TEMPORARILY AND WORK ON IT ONCE TROOPS GOT TO TIBNIN. THEY COULD BE ASSURED THAT WE WOULD SUPPORT THEM IN TRYING TO WORK OUT A SOLUTION THEY COULD LIVE WITH.

3. BOUTROS SAID THAT, SPEAKING FRANKLY, THEIR RECENT EXPERIENCE WAS NOT ENCOURAGING REGARDING U.S. SUPPORT. WE SEEMED UNABLE TO MOVE ISRAELIS WHENEVER IT WAS ISSUE LATTER REALLY CARED ABOUT. GOL HAD NO CONFIDENCE THAT A SOLUTION COULD BE WORKED OUT BY US. HADDAD WAS MERELY A SYMBOL OF ISRAELI INTENTION TO HANG ON TO SOUTH LEBANON. HE WAS A SWORD OF DAMOCLES HELD OVER THE LEBANESE. ISRAELIS DID NOT WANT LEBANESE ARMY IN SOUTH. COULD WE GUARANTEE ISRAELI COOPERATION?

4. WE THEN HAD ANIMATED DISCUSSION ABOUT LEBANESE GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS. I POINTED OUT THAT WHEN THEY HAD DECIDED TO MOVE SOUTH THEY KNEW THERE WERE NO ASSURANCES REGARDING ISRAELI WILLINGNESS TO ACCOMMODATE THEIR INTERESTS IN SOUTH LEBANON. IT WAS TRUE WEIZMAN HAD SAID THAT MOVEMENT OF LEBANESE ARMY INTO QA'QA-IYYA-TIBNIN AREA WAS ACCEPTABLE, BUT HE HAD SPOKEN OF MOVE SOUTH FROM LITANI AND ISRAELIS HAD OBJECTED TO MARJAYOUN ROUTE FROM BEGINNING BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT LEBANESE ARMY WAS SYRIAN-DOMINATED AND WERE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT WHAT IT MIGHT DO IN ENCLAVES. FURTHERMORE, WEIZMAN HAD GIVEN NO UNDERTAKINGS. INDEED, HE HAD MADE CLEAR HE DID NOT AGREE TO LEBANESE ARMY MOVING INTO BUFFER ZONE. IF LEBANESE HAD PASSED MARJAYOUN WITHOUT INCIDENT AND ARRIVED AT TIBNIN, THEY WOULD STILL HAVE BEFORE THEM PROBLEM OF GRADUALLY REASSERTING LEBANESE AUTHORITY IN SOUTH. WE HAD ALL KNOWN THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE GRADUAL PROCESS. UNFORTUNATELY THEY WERE NOW STOPPED AT KAQKABA. QUESTION REALLY WAS. COULD  
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THEY LIVE WITH HADDAD IN MARJAYOUN FOR A WHILE?

5. HOSS SAID IT WOULD BE HUMILIATING FOR ARMY TO PROCEED UNDER CONDITIONS PROPOSED. IT WOULD PERHAPS BE LESS HUMILIATING TO WITHDRAW. I DISAGREED AND SAID THAT IF THEY WITHDREW THEY WOULD BE HUMILIATED AND WOULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING. WHILE I DID NOT AGREE THAT PASSAGE BY MARJAYOUN UNDER CONDITIONS WE HAD SUGGESTED WOULD NECESSARILY BE HUMILIATING, EVEN IF IT WAS, THEY WOULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING BY GETTING TO TIBNIN. THEY WOULD BE AHEAD OF WHERE THEY WOULD BE IF THEY WITHDREW.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----045308 021208Z /44

Z O 021022Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV FLASH

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM FLASH

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9032

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AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

6. BOUTROS ASKED WHAT WE WOULD THINK OF HAVING SECRETARY GENERAL CALL FOR MEETING OF SECURITY COUNCIL BECAUSE ISRAELIS WERE BLOCKING IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 425. I SAID I WAS UN-INSTRUCTED ON QUESTION BUT THOUGH WE MIGHT FIND IT EMBARRASSING. BOUTROS ASKED ME TO GET OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF U.S. POSITION. I SUBSEQUENTLY SAW PERMREP TUENI IN HALLWAY AND TOLD HIM I WAS SURE WE WOULD PREFER TO CONTINUE WITH QUIET DIPLOMACY. TUENI IS RETURNING TO NEW YORK TODAY AND I SUSPECT LEBANESE WILL MOVE FORWARD ON SECURITY COUNCIL ROUTE UNLESS SOMEHOW WE CAN PREVAIL UPON THE ISRAELIS TO LET THE COLUMN THROUGH ON ACCEPTABLE TERMS.

7. MEETING CONCLUDED WITH BOUTROS SAYING THEY WERE GOING TO GO BACK AND TALK TO MILITARY AND DECIDE WHAT TO DO. THEY HAD NO FIRM POSITION YET. I GATHERED FROM TUENI, HOWEVER, THAT GENERAL  
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KHOURY HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THEY PROCEED TO SEND IN THE UNITS IN SMALL INCREMENTS AND WORRY ABOUT HADDAD LATER.

8. COMMENT:

A. OUR INABILITY TO PREVENT ISRAELIS FROM BLOCKING MOVE HAS BEEN SERIOUS BLOW TO LEBANESE CONFIDENCE IN US. AT THIS POINT THEY FEEL THEY HAVE NO REASON TO PUT FAITH IN ANY ASSURANCES WE MAY GIVE THEM REGARDING CONTINUED SUPPORT ONCE THEY GET TO TIBNIN.

B. I THINK IT PROBABLE LEBANESE WILL SEEK ACTION IN SECURITY

COUNCIL AS LEAST EMBARRASSING WAY OUT OF THEIR PRESENT DILEMMA. THEY WOULD RATHER HAVE INITIATIVE TAKEN BY WALDHEIM, HOWEVER, RATHER THAN CALL FOR MEETING THEMSELVES BECAUSE THEY THINK THAT WOULD PUT THEM IN BETTER LEGAL AND POLITICAL POSITION.

C. THIS AFFAIR IS GOING TO HAVE DISASTROUS IMPACT INTERNALLY IF IT IS NOT RESOLVED SATISFACTORILY.

D. IT SEEMS TO ME HADDAD AND SHIDIAC ARE A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR ESCAPE FROM THIS IMPASSE.

9. ADDENDUM. BOUTROS JUST (1230) CALLED TO SAY LEBANESE ARE STILL DEBATING WHAT TO DO AND MOST URGENT REQUEST THEY HAVE IS THAT WE GET ISRAELIS TO STOP SHELLING LEBANESE CONTINGENT WHICH HAS BEEN SHELLED FOR AN HOUR THIS MORNING BY GUNS FIRING FROM MARJAYOUN AND BINT JEBAIL SECTOR. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER, GIVEN REPORTED DIVERGENCES OF VIEW BETWEEN WEIZMAN AND EYTAN, WE WERE CERTAIN LATTER WOULD COOPERATE IN PROPOSALS PUT FORTH BY WEIZMAN. (LEBANESE FEEL THAT THERE HAS BEEN CHANGE IN ISRAELI POSITION SINCE LEONARD SAW WEIZMAN LAST WEEK AND WEIZMAN AGREED TO ENTRY OF LEBANESE TROOPS TO SOUTH. BOUTROS' REMARKS IMPLY THEY ATTRIBUTE THIS CHANGE TO EYTAN.)

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10. NOTE: IN DISCUSSION AT PALACE BOUTROS ALSO REFERRED TO APPARENT CHANGE IN ISRAELI ATTITUDE SINCE LEONARD-WEIZMAN TALK. I SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE. ISRAELIS HAD MADE CLEAR FROM BEGINNING THEIR OPPOSITION TO MARJAYOUN ROUTE, BUT LEBANESE HAD INSISTED ON IT FOR REASONS OF THEIR OWN. SARKIS EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS ONLY ROUTE ALONG WHICH SYRIANS COULD CONTROL PALESTINIANS. I SAID IT WAS NOT SYRIANS BUT FATAH WHICH HAD PROTECTED THEM FROM KFAR MISHKI TO KAWKABA. WHY COULD NOT FATAH HAVE PROTECTED THEM ALONG NABATIYA ROUTE? SARKIS EXPLAINED THAT SYRIANS NOT AS ABLE TO USE THEIR ARTILLERY AGAINST PALESTINIANS ON WESTERN SLOPE AS ON THE EASTERN, THEREFORE FATAH WOULD HAVE BEEN LESS COOPERATIVE. I THEN POINTED OUT THAT SUPPLY LINE VIA MARJAYOUN WOULD BE SUBJECT TO BLOCKAGE BY MILITIAS AT MARJAYOUN. SARKIS SAID THEY WOULD HAVE TO RELY ON UNIFIL. I POINTED OUT THAT UNIFIL BROUGHT IN ALL ITS SUPPLIES FROM ISRAEL, NOT FROM THE NORTH. THIS THEY DID NOT REALIZE. IN SHORT, SARKIS, HOSS AND BOUTROS HAVE BEEN SO TRANSFIXED BY POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THIS OPERATION THEY HAVE NOT THOUGHT TO QUESTION MILITARY JEDGEMENTS AND STAFF WORK OF LEBANESE ARMY.

PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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